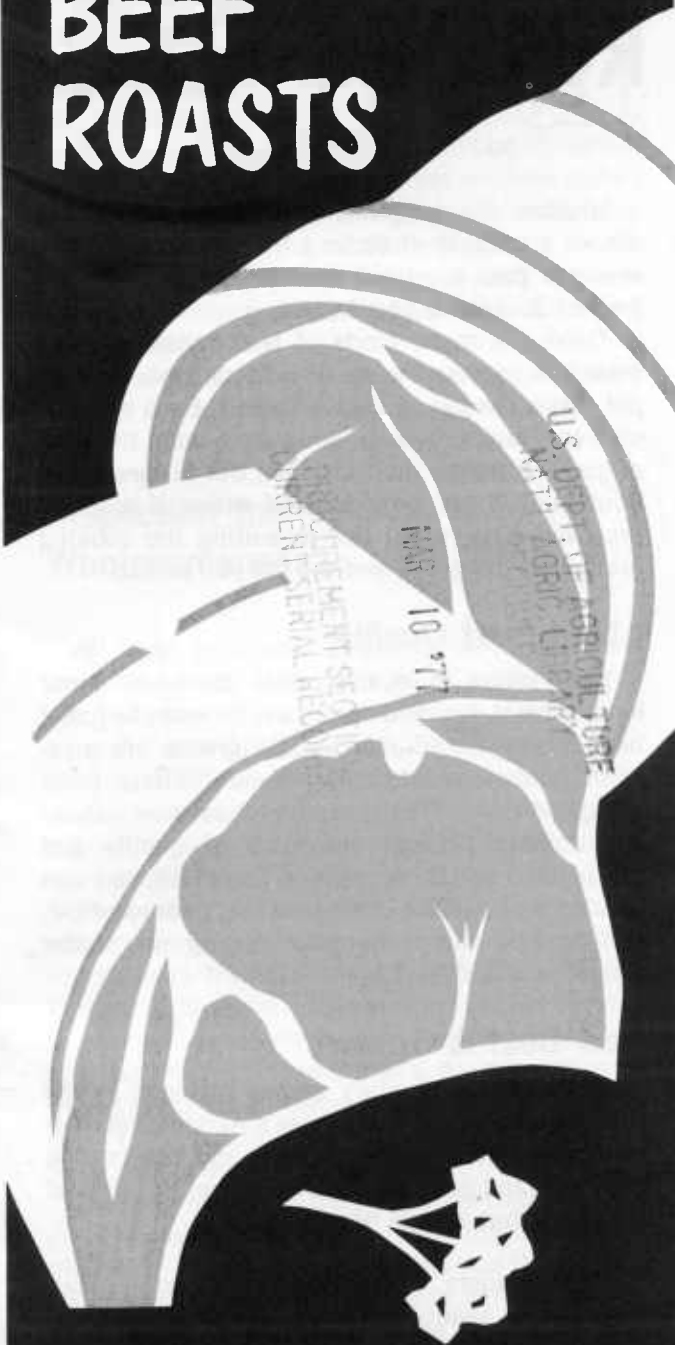


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# How to Buy BEEF ROASTS



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

# How to Buy BEEF ROASTS



Whether it's for pleasing a family, delighting dinner guests, or stretching the food budget, the versatile beef roast is a favorite choice of homemakers across the country.

There are many kinds of beef roasts ranging from rib roasts, the gourmet's delight, to arm pot roasts, for hearty he-man meals. Each of these cuts can vary in quality, depending upon the kind of carcass from which it came, but all are nutritious and all can provide good eating if properly prepared. The secret lies in suiting the cooking method to the grade and the cut you select.

## About Beef Quality

Beef varies in quality more than any other kind of meat. But you don't have to learn to judge beef quality for yourself. USDA grades are a reliable guide to meat quality—its tenderness, juiciness, and flavor. The grades are based on nationally uniform Federal standards of quality and are applied by USDA graders. Therefore, you can be sure that a USDA Choice rib roast, for example, will provide the same good eating no matter where or when you buy it.

## How Beef is Graded

Grading is a voluntary service provided by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Marketing Service to meat packers and others who request it and pay a fee for the service. Not all beef is graded, but a large percentage is.

USDA graders, who are highly trained in determining beef quality, grade whole carcasses, quar-

ters, or wholesale cuts. When the carcass is graded, a shield-shaped grade mark containing the letters USDA and the grade name—such as Prime, Choice, or Good—is applied with a roller stamp. Then when the carcass is divided into retail cuts, the grade shield appears on most cuts.

Beef carcasses are also graded for yield of trimmed retail cuts. Yield Grades 1 through 5 denote, chiefly, the ratio of lean meat to fat. When you're buying retail cuts, you needn't be concerned with the yield grade because most retailers closely trim the cuts. But if you're buying large cuts, quarters, or sides for your home freezer, look for the yield grade shield—Yield Grade 1 means the highest yield of trimmed retail cuts, and Yield Grade 5 the lowest.

Only meat which has first passed a strict inspection for wholesomeness may be graded.



## Inspection for Wholesomeness



All meat processed in plants which sell their products across State lines must, under Federal law, be inspected for wholesomeness. This service is another provided by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. USDA meat inspectors also supervise the cleanliness and operating procedures of meat packing plants to assure that meat is not contaminated or adulterated.

Meat which passes the USDA inspection for wholesomeness is stamped with a round mark which bears the legend "U.S. INSP'D & P'S'D." This mark is placed only once on wholesale cuts, so that you are likely to see it only on large cuts of meat. Packaged meat foods, however, such as frozen dinners and canned meats, are required to carry the inspection mark on the label if they are to be sold in interstate commerce.

Learn to recognize the inspection circle and the grade shields. Remember they mean different things. The inspection mark tells you the meat is clean and wholesome. The grade shields tell you the quality and yield grade of the beef.

## LOOK FOR THE GRADE

Each USDA quality grade is a measure of a distinct level of quality. Because beef can vary so much in quality, it takes eight grades to span the range. The lower three grades—USDA Utility, Cutter, and Canner—are seldom, if ever, sold as retail cuts. They go mostly into ground beef or into processed meat items such as hot dogs.

The grade most widely sold at retail is USDA Choice. Choice grade is produced in the greatest volume and retailers have found that this level of quality pleases most of their customers. Some stores, however, offer two grades—Prime and Choice or Choice and Good, for example—so that their customers may have a choice of quality and price.

Pictured below are rib roasts in each of the first five grades, together with a description of the level of quality that can be expected in each of those grades.



### USDA PRIME



Prime grade beef is the ultimate in tenderness, juiciness, and flavor. It has abundant marbling—flecks of fat within the lean—which enhances both flavor and juiciness. A U.S. Prime rib roast is considered by many as the finest meat dish available. Prime round, rump, and sirloin tip roasts also provide excellent eating. Prime grade roasts are the best for dry-heat (oven) cooking.



### USDA CHOICE



USDA Choice rib, rump, round, and sirloin tip roasts can also, like Prime, be oven roasted. They will be quite tender, juicy, and flavorful. Choice grade beef has slightly less marbling than Prime, but still is of very high quality.



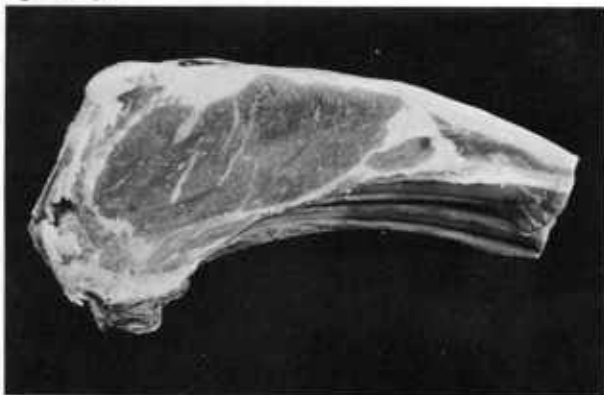
### USDA GOOD



Good grade beef is very uniform in quality and somewhat more lean than the higher grades. It is relatively tender, but because it has less marbling it lacks some of the juiciness and flavor of the higher grades. Some stores sell this quality of beef under a "house" brand name rather than under the USDA grade name.



## USDA STANDARD



Standard grade beef has a high proportion of lean meat and little fat. Because it comes from young animals, beef of this grade is fairly tender. But because it lacks marbling, it is very mild in flavor and most cuts will be somewhat dry unless prepared with moist heat.



## USDA COMMERCIAL



Commercial grade beef is produced only from mature animals—the top four grades are restricted to young animals. Although it has abundant marbling (compare it with the Prime grade above) it will require long, slow cooking with moist heat to make it tender. However, Commercial grade beef will have the rich, full, flavor characteristic of mature beef and if properly prepared can provide delicious and economical meat dishes.

## LOOK FOR THE CUT

Regardless of their quality grade, some cuts of beef are naturally more tender than others. Cuts from the less-used muscles along the back of the animal—the rib and loin sections—will always be more tender than those from the active muscles such as the shoulder (chuck), flank, and round.

The most tender cuts make up only a small proportion of the beef carcass—and they are in greatest demand. Therefore, they command a higher price than other cuts.


















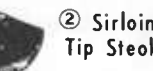
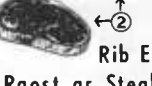




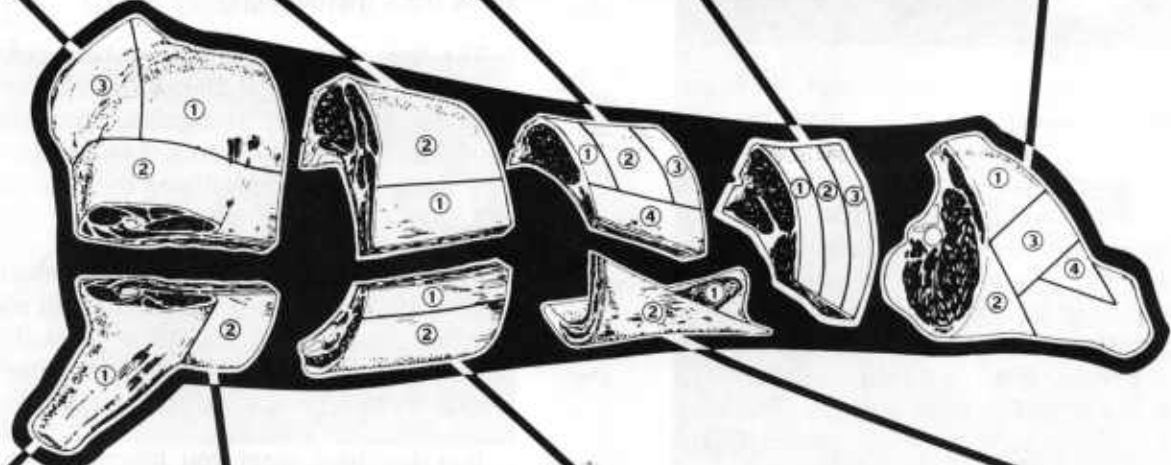






Names given beef cuts sometimes vary from store to store and in different parts of the country. It would be impossible to try to list them all here. Moreover, the terms used do not always mean the same thing. For example, a “cross cut rib roast” may be cut from the blade portion of the chuck in some places—in others it may be from the shoulder arm portion of the chuck. It is not the cut from the rib roast, as you might assume from the name.

The best guide in identifying beef cuts is the standard terminology shown in the following pages and generally recognized throughout the meat industry. Many stores, fortunately, do employ these terms in identifying the beef cuts they sell.

The beef roasts illustrated are the most widely sold and widely known. Together with each picture is a description of the cut, suggested cooking methods for it in various grades, and approximate amounts you'll need to buy per serving.

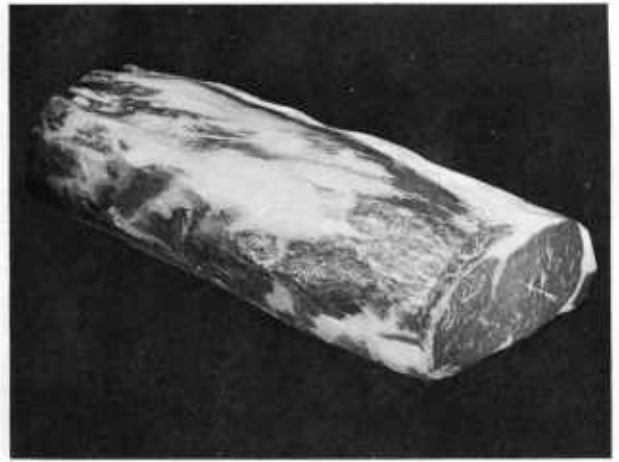
Buy any beef roast you intend to cook with dry heat (oven roasting) big enough—at least 4 pounds—to keep it from overcooking, especially if you want to serve some of it rare or medium rare.

# BEEF CHART

 ① Blade Pot-roast or Steak	 ② Standing Rib Roast	 ① Club Steak	 ① Pin Bone Sirloin Steak	 ③ Round Steak	 ① Standing Rump
 ② Arm Pot-roast or Steak	 ② Rib Steak	 ② T-Bone Steak	 ② Flat Bone Sirloin Steak	 ③ Tap Round Steak	 ② Sirloin Tip Roast
 ③ Stew Meat or Ground Meat	 ② Rib Eye Roast or Steak	 ① ② ③ Strip Loin Steak	 ② ③ Filet Mignon Tenderloin Steak (also from Sirloin 1,2,3)	 ③ Bottom Round Steak	 ② Sirloin Tip Steak
	 ① Short Ribs	 ④ Stew Meat or Ground Meat	 ③ Wedge Bone Sirloin Steak	 ③ Eye of Round Roast or Steak	 ④ Heel of Round
CHUCK	RIB	SHORT LOIN	LOIN END	ROUND	
					
FORE SHANK	BRISKET	PLATE		FLANK	
 ① Stew Meat or Ground Meat	 ② Fresh Brisket	 ① Short Ribs	 ② Stew Meat or Ground Meat	 ② Stew Meat or Ground Meat	 ① Flank Steak



**RIB ROAST**—Unexcelled for tenderness and flavor, easy to prepare, carve, and serve, this is the favorite for company fare. It can be oven-roasted in the top four grades but for maximum tenderness, juiciness, and flavor select USDA Prime or Choice. Because it has a rather large proportion of bone and fat, you will need to allow at least one-half a pound of rib roast per person. For company meals, you may wish to allow up to a pound per person. Buy it at least two ribs thick for proper cooking. Frequently called: Standing rib or prime rib (even though not graded USDA Prime).



**RIBEYE ROAST**—The meaty, boneless heart of the standing rib, this cut has excellent flavor and is superbly tender in the higher grades. Like the standing rib, from which it is cut, it can be oven-roasted in Prime through Standard grades. Allow a third of a pound per person.



**RUMP ROAST**—This is a very flavorful cut, but it is less tender than the rib and it also contains a considerable amount of bone. In Prime, Choice, and Good grades, it can be oven-roasted; pot roast the lower grades. The rump is often sold boned and rolled, for easier carving. Allow at least a half-pound of bone-in rump per person and about a third of a pound per person for boneless rump.



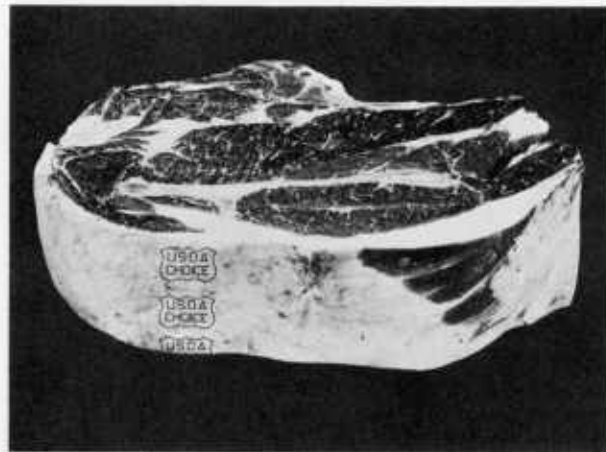
**SIRLOIN TIP**—This is a boneless roast, with very little waste. Despite its name, it is not as tender as a sirloin steak. But it has good flavor and in Prime, Choice, and Good grades is tender enough to be oven-roasted. Pot roast lower grades. Allow at least a third of a pound per person. Also frequently called: loin tip, round tip, knuckle.



**EYE-OF-ROUND ROAST**—Lean and meaty, this less-tender cut has good flavor. It may be oven-roasted in Prime and Choice grades but should be pot roasted in lower grades. Allow at least a third of a pound per person.



**HEEL OF ROUND**—A boneless, less-tender cut from the round, this roast contains several muscles, of varying tenderness. It should be pot roasted regardless of grade. Allow at least one-third of a pound per person.

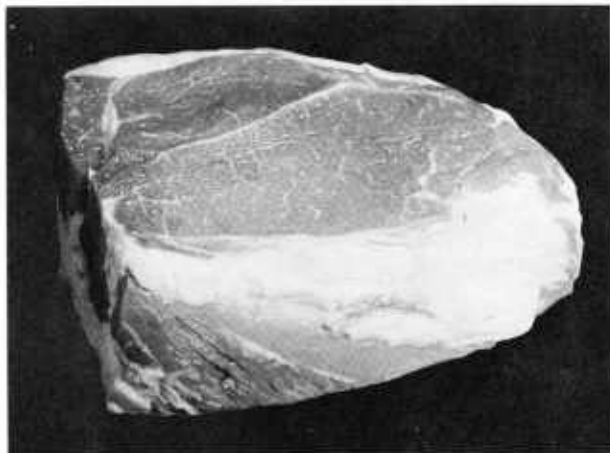


**BLADE CHUCK**—An economical roast, with excellent, full beef flavor, this one can be oven-roasted in the Prime and Choice grades, although it has several muscles that vary in tenderness. All grades make excellent pot roast. You'll need about three-fourths of a pound per person.

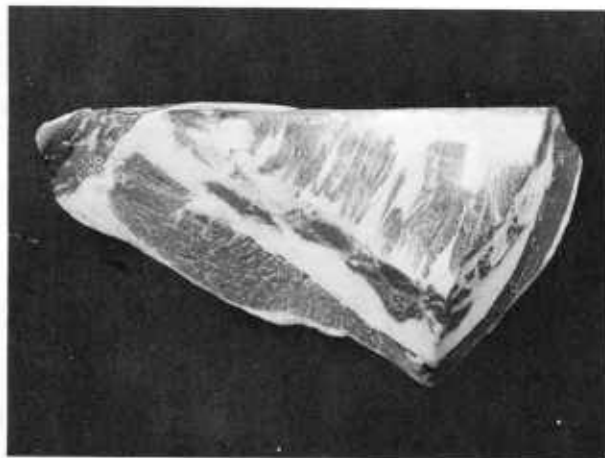




**SHOULDER ARM**—Contains less bone than the blade chuck, but this cut is less tender. It has the same well-developed flavor, however. Pot roast in all grades. Allow about one-half of a pound per person. Also called: round bone chuck or arm roast.



**BONELESS SHOULDER ROAST**—This is a meaty cut from the outside of the chuck. It has a well-developed flavor, and no bone. A fairly tender cut, it may be oven-roasted in the Prime and Choice grades. Pot roast lower grades. Allow one-third of a pound, or more, per person.



**BRISKET**—Often cured and sold as corned beef, the brisket is also sold fresh, usually with bones removed. Definitely a less tender cut, it must be cooked with moist heat (pot roasted) in all grades. Allow at least one-half of a pound per person.

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE : 1976 O-221-335

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# USDA Grades Help You Choose BEEF ROASTS

## LOOK FOR THE GRADE

- **USDA Prime**—Highest quality, most tender, juicy, flavorful
- **USDA Choice**—Most popular quality, very tender, juicy, flavorful
- **USDA Good**—Lean, fairly tender, not as juicy and flavorful

USDA  
PRIME

## LOOK FOR THE CUT

- **Most tender**—rib roasts, ribeye roasts
- **Moderately tender**—rump roasts, sirloin tip roasts
- **Less tender**—eye-of-round, blade chuck, boneless shoulder roast
- **Least tender**—heel of round, shoulder arm, brisket

USDA  
CHOICE

USDA  
GOOD